



## **Government of the District of Columbia Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B**

### **RESOLUTION #4B-22-1011**

**Supporting & Providing Recommendations on B24-0802,  
Green New Deal for Housing Amendment Act of 2022  
Adopted October 24, 2022**

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B takes note of the following:

- On April 29, 2022, Councilmember Janeese Lewis George (Ward 4) introduced [B24-0802](#), the Green New Deal for Housing Amendment Act of 2022. Councilmembers Brianne Nadeau (Ward 1), Brooke Pinto (Ward 2), Charles Allen (Ward 6), Trayon White (Ward 8), Anita Bonds (At-Large), and Robert White (At-Large) co-introduced the proposed legislation.
- The Green New Deal for Housing Amendment Act proposes a framework and general guidelines for establishing social housing in the District of Columbia. Social housing is government-owned, mixed-income housing, where market-units subsidize affordable units, cover maintenance costs, and even go toward creating additional social housing stock. Like public housing, social housing is government-owned, but social housing is [“different from the segregated, income-restricted, and underfunded public housing that has defined the American model.”](#)
- More specifically, the proposed legislation would establish an Office of Social Housing Developments tasked with the ownership, development, maintenance, and growth of District-owned social housing. To the extent practicable, one-third of the units would be affordable for extremely low-income families (30 percent of Median Family Income); one-third of the units would be affordable for very low-income families (50 percent of Median Family Income); and one-third of the units would be market rate. Market-rate units would subsidize affordable units.
- The proposed legislation would “[u]se federal and local grants and loans including the Housing Production Trust Fund and Green Finance Authority to develop” social housing, as well as give the Office of Social Housing Developments the authority to issue bonds, but those bonds would not be backed by the full faith and credit of the District of Columbia. The proposed legislation would create a Social Housing

Development Fund to “collect and use rent from social housing developments to construct and maintain more social housing developments.”

- In addition, the proposed legislation would allow the District to purchase residential property for conversion to social housing and would require the Mayor – when faced with the disposition of public land – to evaluate such properties for conversion into social housing developments. With regard to the latter, where the Executive determines that the property is not appropriate for social housing, the proposed legislation would require justification and a mathematical assessment for why the Executive’s alternative use “will result in more permanently affordable housing for extremely and very low income households than would be created if the property were converted into social housing.”

Social housing furthers the District’s and Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B’s housing goals:

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B believes housing is a human right. The Commission has sought at every opportunity to support and promote safe, stable, and secure housing for all District residents, including through extensive feedback on the District’s annual budgets; support for funding to end chronic homelessness and funding to preserve and expand public housing; extensive feedback on the District’s Comprehensive Plan; expansion and improvement of rent control; and ensuring investments in the Housing Production Trust Fund adhere to the legal requirement that 50 percent of the Fund’s resources be used to serve families with the lowest incomes. The Commission supports deeply affordable housing within our Commission boundaries, and the Commission has supported several new developments that add to the District’s affordable housing stock and advocated for additional affordable housing commitments for new developments. *See generally* [Letter](#) re: Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B FY2023 Budget Priorities (Apr. 25, 2022); [Letter](#) re: Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Priorities (Mar. 22, 2021).
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B was one of the first elected bodies in DC to call for the District to consider and employ social housing. In providing feedback on the District’s Comprehensive Plan in January 2020, the Commission called for the Plan to “include a discussion of social housing as a mechanism to address the affordable housing crisis.” Furthermore, the Commission noted “that the affordable housing crisis requires the District to use every tool available to ensure affordable housing,” including social housing, and recognized “the increased supply of housing – while important – will not alone solve the affordable housing crisis, particularly as related to extremely-low and very low-income households, and must be accompanied by active and

robust City goals and policies to ensure affordability, including affordability for extremely low- and very low-income households, in relation to increased supply.” [Resolution 4B-20-0104](#), Providing Feedback on Proposed Changes to the Comprehensive Plan (Jan. 27, 2020).

- The District’s Office of Planning [responded](#) to Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B’s Resolution on the Comprehensive Plan by stating, “Social Housing is another name for public housing. Current language is sufficient.” The Commission continues to believe that while social housing and public housing are both government-owned housing, they are distinct and each require dedicated consideration and attention.

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B is generally supportive of the Green New Deal for Housing Amendment Act and provides the following preliminary feedback. This feedback is based on the expertise of the Commission’s Housing Justice Committee and its September 7, 2022, meeting with Zachary Marks, Chief Real Estate Officer of the Housing Opportunities Commission in Montgomery County and Rachel Cohen, Senior Policy Reporter with *Vox Media*:

- While the Commission believes that social housing and traditional public housing are distinct, the Commission recognizes there are common interests underlying social housing and traditional public housing. The Commission has repeatedly recognized the DC government’s failures regarding public housing and called for additional funding for public housing repairs, a commitment to maintaining the District’s public housing stock, and protection of public housing residents. See [Resolution 4B-20-0603](#), Supporting Funding in FY 2021 for Public Housing Repairs (June 22, 2020); [Resolution 4B-19-1004](#), Calling on DC Housing Authority to Preserve Public Housing and Protect Public Housing Residents (Oct. 28, 2019); [Resolution 4B-19-0506](#), Supporting Funding for Urgent Public Housing Repairs and Calling for Commitment to Maintain Public Housing Stock (May 20, 2019). *The Commission urges meaningful coordination with the DC Housing Authority and with regard to the DC Council’s oversight of the Housing Authority to fully understand how social housing will complement and not undermine or detract from public housing, to ensure that the development of social housing does not replicate the Housing Authority and the Council’s failures, and to further the efforts for greater accountability from the Housing Authority.*
- The proposed legislation has more stringent affordability metrics than other models for social housing. The required (“to the extent practicable”) affordability mix has the potential to force social housing developments to compete for the same resources as other affordable housing developments. As noted below, different funding structures may require more flexibility as to affordability metrics. *The Commission encourages*

*consideration and comparison of existing social housing models in determining best practices regarding affordability metrics.*

- The proposed legislation potentially requires social housing to compete for affordable housing funding. The lack of a separate capital source makes it very likely social housing developments will be dependent on Housing Production Trust Fund and Low Income Housing Tax Credit funding, which support existing affordable housing projects. To meet the goal of social housing as an independent and important affordable housing tool requires creating the ability to finance these developments without using the usual affordable housing funding sources, all of which are used annually. *The Commission encourages consideration of independent funding streams like Montgomery County’s separate backing of bonds to ensure one affordable housing project is not siphoning funds from another affordable housing project.*
- The proposed legislation could strengthen the crucial role of tenant associations in upholding tenants’ rights. The language around tenant leadership rights is strong, but permissive (“Social housing developments may maintain tenant leadership boards at each property”), which may weaken their implementation. *The Commission recommends a revision to state “shall allow” at the very least or, preferably, “shall allow and support.” The Commission also recommends more broadly consideration of the federally codified tenants’ rights in 24 CFR 245 to see what tenants would be guaranteed through traditional public housing and to consider those regulations a floor of basic rights.*
- The proposed legislation includes environmental standards, including net-zero emissions, on-site solar production, landscape architecture, and multi-modal transportation access. *The Commission encourages consideration and inclusion of stormwater infrastructure. In addition, particularly in light of the abysmal state of the District’s public housing stock, the Commission encourages express inclusion of broader public health standards related to mold, lead, and asbestos, including standards and recommendations on indoor air quality that incorporate evidence on aerosol transmission of viruses in addition to pollution and other environmental toxins.*
- The proposed legislation recognizes the value of community amenities, calling for leasing ground-floor commercial space for childhood development centers, grocery stores, and small locally-owned businesses to the greatest extent possible. *The Commission values the importance of public space as a community amenity and encourages consideration of how best to incorporate public communal spaces – places where residents can spend time without spending money.*

- The proposed legislation could go farther on its environmental goals through stricter off-street parking limitations. Currently, the proposal provides that social housing developments not include off-street parking “in excess of zoning regulations.” *The Commission recommends that social housing developments either limit off-street parking beyond what is already required or provide additional incentives to do so.*

## **RESOLVED:**

- That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B submits Resolution 4B-22-1011, Supporting & Providing Recommendations on B24-0802, Green New Deal for Housing Amendment Act of 2022 (Oct. 24, 2022) to the DC Council’s Committee on Housing and Executive Administration for the record related to its November 17, 2022, hearing on the proposed legislation.
- That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B calls on the DC Council’s Committee on Housing and Executive Administration to consider strengthening the proposed legislation through the aforementioned recommendations, including (1) consideration of the relationship between social housing and traditional public housing and express articulation of how the two affordable housing tools relate to and will not detract from each other; (2) increased flexibility among affordability metrics, particularly as social housing is in its initial stages, to ensure greater likelihood of success and potential for innovative financing; (3) an independent, dedicated funding stream to ensure social housing does not compete with and detract from other affordable housing programs; (4) additional measures to strengthen the crucial role of tenant associations in upholding tenants’ rights; (5) expanded environmental requirements and express inclusion of public health standards; (6) consideration of public space as a community amenity; and (7) higher standards for off-street parking.
- That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B urges continued communications and engagement between the DC Council and the Commission as this proposed legislation moves forward given the Commission’s extensive affordable housing work.

## **FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That the Commission designates Commissioner Erin Palmer, ANC 4B02 and Commissioner Evan Yeats, ANC 4B01, to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this Resolution.

## **FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That, in the event the designated representative Commissioners cannot carry out their representative duties for any reason, the Commission authorizes the Chair to designate another Commissioner to represent the Commission in all matter relating to this Resolution.

**FURTHER RESOLVED:**

That, consistent with DC Code § 1-309, only actions of the full Commission voting in a properly noticed public meeting have standing and carry great weight. The actions, positions, and opinions of individual commissioners, insofar as they may be contradictory to or otherwise inconsistent with the expressed position of the full Commission in a properly adopted resolution or letter, have no standing and cannot be considered as in any way associated with the Commission.

**ADOPTED** by voice vote at a regular public meeting (notice of which was properly given, and at which a quorum of seven members was present) on October 24, 2022, by a vote of 7 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.